

Table 1: Checklist of Ants of Thirunelli in Wayanad (*contd.*)

Genus	species	Synonym	Habitat
<i>Diacamma</i>	<i>rugosum sculptum</i> (Jerdon, 1851)	-	Soil
Distribution in Kerala: Kollam (Thenmala), Thrissur (Chimmnoy Wildlife Sanctuary, KAU Campus), Wayanad (Thirunelli).			
<i>Diacamma</i>	<i>scalpratum</i> (Smith, 1858)	<i>Diacamma compressum</i> Mayr, 1879	Soil
Distribution in Kerala: Kollam (Thenmala), Calicut (Mampad), Wayanad (Thirunelli).			
<i>Leptogenys</i>	<i>ocellifera</i> (Roger, 1861)	-	Soil
Distribution in Kerala: Kollam (Thenmala), Wayanad (Thirunelli), Malappuram (Madappally).			
<i>Odontomachus</i>	<i>haematodes</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	<i>Odontomachus hirsutiusculus</i> Smith, 1858 <i>Odontomachus maxillosa</i> (De Geer, 1773) <i>Odontomachus pallipes</i> Crawley, 1916	Soil
Distribution in Kerala: Kollam (Thenmala), Malappuram (Madappally), Calicut (Mampad), Wayanad (Thirunelli).			

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India for financial assistance. We are grateful to Dr. T.C. Narendran, Emeritus

Professor, Department of Zoology, University of Calicut, Kerala, for critically examining this manuscript and also express our thanks to the Principal Sr. T.F. Pauly, St. Xavier's College for Women, Aluva, for extending her support.

REFERENCES

- BINGHAM, C.T. (1903): Ants and Cuckoo Wasps. The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma: Hymenoptera 2. 506 pp. London.
- BOLTON, B. (1994): Identification Guide to the Ant Genera of the World. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London. Pp. 222.
- ROGER, J. (1863a): Die neu aufgeführten Gattungen und Arten meines Formiciden-Verzeichnisses nebst Ergänzung einiger früher gegebenen Beschreibungen, *Berl. Entomol. Z.* 7: 131-214.
- ROGER, J. (1863b): Verzeichniss der Formiciden-Gattungen und Arten, *Berl. Entomol. Z.* 7(B) Beilage: 1- 65.
- WWF (2001): Wild World. WWF full report, South Western Ghats montane rain forests (IMO151). http://www.worldwildlife.org/wildworld/profiles/terrestrial/im/im0151_full.html.

13. FIRST REPORT ON THE OCCURRENCE OF AN ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT SPIRAL NEMATODE *HELICOTYLENCHUS MULTICINCTUS* COBB. FROM GOA

I.K. PAI¹ AND H.S. GAUR²

¹Department of Zoology, Goa University, Goa 403 206, India. Email: ikpai@unigoa.ac.in

²Division of Nematology, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi 110 012, India. Email: hsg_nema@iari.res.in

Nematodes constitute the largest and diverse group of metazoans on earth. Four of every five metazoans are nematodes. Of the estimated 5,00,000 species of nematodes, only c. 25,000 are known till date (Walia and Bajaj 2003). They may feed on bacteria, algae, fungi and may also be parasitic on plants and animals.

Among nematodes, spiral nematode *Helicotylenchus multicinctus* Cobb. is a well-known plant parasitic nematode causing severe damage to banana plantation. There are reports on the role of *H. multicinctus* on banana by Baghel and Edwards (1977) and Rajendran *et al.* (1979). Goa produces a large quantity of bananas; however, *H. multicinctus* has

not been recorded so far.

Soil samples were collected at a depth of 15-30 cm from a banana plantation in Canacona, Goa. Nematodes were extracted using Cobb's decanting and sieving technique (Cobb 1904, 1913). Based on the studies of morphological characters, the nematode was identified as *Helicotylenchus multicinctus*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We sincerely thank Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, for providing Visiting Fellowship to one of the authors (IKP).

REFERENCES

- BAGHEL, P.P.S. & J.C. EDWARDS (1977): *Helicotylenchus multicinctus* on Banana. *The Allahabad Farmer* 48: 285-289
- COBB, N.A. (1904): Free living and freshwater New Zealand nematodes. *Proc. Cambridge Phil. Soc.* 12: 363-374.
- COBB, N.A. (1913): New nematode genera found inhabiting freshwater and non-brackish soils. *J. Wash. Acad. Sci.* 3: 434-444.
- RAJENDRAN, G., T.G. NAGANATHAN & V. SHIVAGAMI (1979): Studies on banana nematodes. *Indian J. Nematol.* 9: 54.
- WALIA, R.K. & H.K. BAJAJ (2003): Textbook on Introductory Plant Nematology. ICAR, New Delhi.

14. *SCOLOPENDRA HARDWICKEI* (NEWPORT, 1844) FEEDING
ON *OLIGODON TAENIOLATUS* (JERDON, 1853) IN THE SCRUB JUNGLES
OF PONDICHERRY, SOUTHERN INDIA

UTPAL SMART¹, PRAKASH PATEL^{2,3} AND PRADEEP PATTANAYAK²

¹Amphibian and Reptile Diversity Research Centre, Department of Biology, University of Texas at Arlington, TX 76019-049.

Email: utpalsmart@gmail.com

²Project Ecolake, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, Pondicherry, India.

³Email: prakashpatel48@gmail.com

Apart from feeding on three different species of bats (Molinari *et al.* 2005), centipedes of the genus *Scolopendra* (Chilopoda: Scolopendromorpha) have also been reported to prey upon reptiles by Lawrence in 1953, Butler in 1970 and in 1975 by Easterla (Carpenter and Gillingham 1984). These include frogs, toads, small lizards, and serpents (Molinari *et al.* 2005).

Individuals of three North American snake species, namely Central Texas Whipsnake *Masticophis taeniatus girandi* (Stejneger and Barbour 1917), Texas Brown Snake *Storeria dekayi texana* (Trapido 1944), and Lined Snake *Tropidoclonion lineatum* have been recorded as the prey of the Giant Desert Centipede *Scolopendra heros* (Girard 1853), when kept in the same vivarium as the centipede. All the snakes were killed by incisions to the ventral neck and fed upon by the centipede on successive nights (Cates pers. comm.). Easterla (1975) describes a scolopendrid feeding on the Long-nose Snake (*Rhinocheilus* sp.) (Forti *et al.* 2007). All of the above records refer to North, Central and South American species of *Scolopendra*, some of which are known for their large sizes.

India harbours 95 species of Scolopendrids, *Scolopendra hardwickei* (Newport 1844) being the largest (Khanna 2009). There have been observations of Indian Scolopendrids feeding on toads and frogs (Daniels pers. comm.), and a gecko in the wild (Whitaker pers. comm.). This paper reports the first record of predation on *Oligodon taeniolatus* (Serpentes: Colubridae) by *S. hardwickei*, and one of the few published accounts of a Scolopendrid feeding on an Indian snake (for another record see Mirza and Ahmed 2009) under natural conditions, in a private reforestation site of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram near Pondicherry.

Oligodon taeniolatus is a Kukri snake which is active by day and night, and may be seen preying on amphibian and reptile eggs. It is an opisthoglyphous (rear-fanged) snake

and possesses a functional venom gland and is known to feed on lizards in captivity (Whitaker and Captain 2004)

The observation was made by one of the authors (Pattanayak) on the dark night of July 06, 2009, around 21:00 hrs. The observer's attention was first drawn to the scene of predation by the sound of pebbles rubbing against one another. Upon investigation the source of the sound was identified as a struggling *Oligodon taeniolatus*, c. 36 cm long, trying to escape under a layer of pebbles while a large centipede, c. 25 cm long, fiercely held on to the area immediately behind the snake's cloacae.

The maxillipeds (the first 4 to 5 pairs) of the centipede had clearly pierced the Kukri's flesh; blood was oozing from the gaping lesion along with some viscera of the yet living reptile. The mandibles of the centipede were thrust into this wound and the arthropod seemed to be actively ingesting the snake's fluids.

Despite fiercely trying, the snake was unable to free itself from the clutches of the centipede, which then began to move up the length of the snake. While doing so it curved its appendages around the snake.

Forty-five minutes after the struggle began the centipede had moved its entire body upon the snake's dorsal surface and inflicted yet another deep wound near the throat. The snake seemed to be giving in but still put up some resistance as the predator and prey coiled into contorted postures.

Unfortunately, the centipede abandoned its prey when the observer got too close; the arthropod vanished swiftly into the immediate undergrowth while the snake crawled on limply. A closer inspection of the wounds revealed a protruding bone, demonstrating the depth and extent of the laceration the scolopendrid had inflicted on it. The snake was left alone and, judging by its conditions, probably died in the